

# SENATOR TOM UDALL:

## ADVANCING PRIORITIES FOR INDIAN COUNTRY

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Throughout his career in public service, Tom has worked with New Mexico's 23 federally-recognized Tribes and Native leaders across the country to uphold federal trust and treaty obligations to Indian Country.



Serving as **vice chairman of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs** and top Democrat on the committee that funds and oversees the **Department of the Interior** and the **Indian Health Service**, Tom has worked on a bipartisan basis to pass legislation to reinforce the principles of Tribal sovereignty and self-determination, support Native economies, and protect and sustain cultural resources.

Udall has been a champion for Native communities, fighting to uphold our trust responsibility to Tribes, respect Tribal sovereignty, and help create prosperity and opportunity.



# PROMOTING TRIBAL SOVEREIGNTY AND SUPPORTING TRIBAL SELF-DETERMINATION AND SELF-GOVERNMENT

Tom's work as vice chairman of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs has been guided by the core principles of respecting Tribal sovereignty, upholding the federal government's trust and treaty obligations, and promoting Tribal self-determination and self-governance. In addition to supporting the federal recognition of seven new Tribes by Congress, Tom has led efforts to uphold these core principles, including:



- Securing **\$8 billion in the CARES Act** in dedicated COVID-19 relief for Tribal governments to respond to the pandemic and keep essential safety net programs running in the face of economic uncertainty. **The Trump administration and Senate Republicans wanted to leave Tribes out completely, but Tom fought back.**
- Enacting the **PROGRESS Act** to improve Tribes' ability to customize federal Indian programs at the Department of the Interior to best suit their communities' unique needs.
- Enacting provisions of the **CROPS for Indian Country Act**, which were included in the 2018 Farm Bill reauthorization, to expand Tribal self-determination programs to the USDA for the first time ever.
- Authoring the **Indian Programs Advance Appropriations Act** and the **Indian Health Service Advance Appropriations Act** to provide budget certainty for federally-funded essential Tribal programs and services.



# DEFENDING SACRED LAND, CULTURAL RESOURCES, AND CIVIL RIGHTS

Tom has worked with Tribal communities to expand protections for Native lands, civil rights, and sacred cultural resources by leading:

- Protections for **Chaco Culture National Historical Park** from oil, gas, and minerals leasing within a 10-mile radius of the park, reinforcing a long-standing “buffer zone” while funding \$1 million for a study for Tribes to identify culturally and historically significant areas.
- The **ANTIQUITIES Acts of 2018 and 2019** to reverse the attacks on national monuments home to Tribal sacred sites, like Bears Ears National Monument and Grand Staircase Escalante National Monument.
- The **Tribal Wildlife Corridors Act of 2019** to highlight the unique needs of Tribal communities and the importance of supporting native species and wildlife connectivity on Tribal lands.
- The **Native American Voting Rights Act** to provide the resources and oversight to ensure Native Americans have equal access to the electoral process.
- The **Native American Language Resource Center Act** to support establishment of a Native language resource center to provide technical assistance and resources to Native language education programs.
- The **Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act of 2006** and the **Esther Martinez Native American Languages Program Reauthorization Act of 2019** to fund language revitalization programs and sustain thriving Native communities. These bills were signed into law in 2006 and 2019, respectively.
- The **Native Language Immersion Student Achievement Act**, which was enacted as part of the 2015 Elementary and Secondary Education Act reauthorization, to create a first-of-its-kind grant program for Native language immersion programs and schools at the Department of Education.
- The **Durbin Feeling Native American Languages Act of 2020** to ensure the federal government is living up to policies and principles set out in the Native American Languages Act of 1990.

# IMPROVING TRIBAL PUBLIC SAFETY

Tom championed legislation to protect Tribal public safety. In consultation with Tribes Tom introduced and supported legislation to increase Tribal funding and resources to protect Native communities, including:

- Enacting landmark **protections for Native women in the 2013 Violence Against Women Act** reauthorization by restoring Tribal courts' authority to prosecute non-Indian perpetrators of domestic violence, dating violence, and protective order violations that occurred on Tribal lands.
- Advancing the **Savanna's Act** and the **Not Invisible Act** to combat the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) crisis by improving case coordination between law enforcement agencies and federal departments – both signed into law.
- Leading the **Bridging Agency Data Gaps and Ensuring Safety (BADGES) for Native Communities Act** to increase the effectiveness of federal missing person resources, and giving Tribes and States resources to coordinate response to the MMIWG crisis.
- Championing the **Native Youth and Tribal Officer Protection Act (NYTOPA)** and the **Justice for Native Survivors of Sexual Violence Act** to restore Tribal courts' authority to prosecute non-Indian perpetrators of sexual assault, rape, child violence, and violence against Tribal criminal justice personnel exercising that authority.
- Supporting the **Securing Urgent Resources Vital to Indian Victim Empowerment (SURVIVE) Act** to provide Tribes with parity access to federal victim assistance resources.



# ELEVATING TRIBAL HEALTH

Tom has increased funding for the Indian Health Service (IHS) throughout his career and found common-sense solutions to level the playing field for Tribes. Under Tom's leadership, funding for IHS has increased by 30 percent since 2015. During his tenure, health care facilities construction and improvement programs surged by 98 percent, and he helped lead the charge to fully fund contract support costs as required by the Indian Self-Determination Act. Tom has championed efforts to strengthen Native health care and public health infrastructure, including:

- Securing roughly **\$2 billion** in dedicated COVID-19 resources for Native health systems in the CARES Act and the Paycheck Protection Program and Health Care Enhancement Act.
- Fighting to protect provisions in the **Affordable Care Act**, which permanently reauthorized the Indian Health Care Improvement Act and increased IHS revenue up to 70 percent, by convening groups of Democratic Senators for emergency roundtables, speeches, and events.
- The **CDC Tribal Public Health Security and Preparedness Act** to grant Tribes access to federal public health emergency preparedness programs.
- The **Tribal Health Data Improvement Act** to help Tribes, Tribal epidemiology centers, and IHS-supported urban Indian health centers access federal public health data.
- The **Tribal Medical Supplies Stockpile Access Act** to extend access to the U.S. Strategic National Stockpile, a federal medical supply repository, to the IHS, Tribes, and IHS-supported urban Indian health centers.
- The **Tribal School Federal Insurance Parity Act** to ensure teachers and staff at Tribally-operated Bureau of Indian Education schools have parity access to federal health and life insurance programs.
- The **Health Care Access for Urban Native Veterans Act** to provide Native veterans living in urban areas with greater access to culturally-competent medical care.
- The **Urban Indian Health Parity Act** to improve Medicaid coordination for Native beneficiaries who receive services at IHS-supported urban Indian health centers.
- The **Opioid Response Enhancement Act**, which was included in the SUPPORT for Patients and Communities Act, to provide Tribes parity access to federal opioid response grants for states.
- The **Native Behavioral Health Access Improvement Act** and **\$20 million** in FY2019 and FY2020 appropriations packages for the IHS to deploy as a new pilot high-flexibility grant program for Tribes to design behavioral health and substance abuse programs to suit their local community needs.
- Fighting to secure multiple reauthorization of the **Special Diabetes Program for Indians**, which federal and Tribal officials have described as one of the most successful public health interventions ever enacted by Congress.

# PROTECTING NATIVE CHILDREN

Tom has stood with Tribes to protect Native children and defend the Indian Child Welfare Act. In addition to securing millions of dollars in funding for the Bureau of Indian Education and Tribal schools — nearly tripling the amounts for school, public safety, and natural resources construction and improvements under his leadership — he has enacted legislation and supported efforts to strengthen accountability to keep Native children safe, including:



- Leading the call for **full IHS transparency** regarding the agency’s mismanagement of now-confirmed allegations of child patient abuse against a former IHS pediatrician.
- Leading a bipartisan group of 77 lawmakers in filing an amicus brief in defense of the constitutionality of the **Indian Child Welfare Act**.
- Enacting the **Ashlyne Mike AMBER Alert in Indian Country Act** to provide Tribes access to the national AMBER Alert system.
- Supporting the **Alyce Spotted Bear and Walter Soboleff Commission on Native Children Act**, enacted in 2016, to convene a commission within the Department Justice to conduct a comprehensive study of federal, state, local, and Tribal programs that serve Native children.

# STRENGTHENING TRIBAL ECONOMIES

Tom has advocated for policies that would stimulate and strengthen Tribal economies including through legislation that would fill critical gaps for Native entrepreneurs, jumpstart Tribal economies, and bolster Native-owned and Tribally-owned businesses.

- Authored the **Native American Business Incubators Act** to support Native entrepreneurs launch thriving businesses, now law.
- Secured access to the CARES Act **Paycheck Protection Program** for all Tribally-owned businesses, including Tribal gaming enterprises.
- Achieved key funding for Tribal agriculture and **food sovereignty**, including the **Tribal Food and Housing Security Act** and his bipartisan legislation **CROPS for Indian Country Act**, in the final 2018 Farm Bill.
- Cosponsored the **Native American Tourism and Improving Visitor Experiences (NATIVE) Act** to improve inclusion of Tribes and Native communities in national tourism promotion and strategic planning efforts.
- Held **three Indian Affairs Committee field hearings** in New Mexico on Tribal culture, arts, patrimony, and health.



# BUILDING UP TRIBAL COMMUNITIES

Tom understands how important housing stability and financing access is for Tribal members who live on trust lands, and has focused on solutions to attaining homeownership, infrastructure needs such as reliable water access and high speed broadband in Tribal communities, and proposals to address Native American veteran homelessness. Key bills Tom has introduced or cosponsored include:

- The **Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act (NAHASDA)** to enhance Tribes' ability to provide safe and adequate housing for their communities, including key improvements to the law based on Tribal feedback to ensure the program is run efficiently and effectively and to meet current needs for Indian housing.
- The **Housing Assistance Fund** legislation that includes a five-percent Tribal set-aside of \$3.75 billion for the use of eligible recipients under NAHASDA for mortgage payment assistance, including broadband internet access service and any other assistance to prevent evictions, mortgage delinquency or default.
- The **Tribal HUD-VASH Act** to provide Tribes access to a rental and housing assistance program for veterans run by HUD and the Veterans Administration.
- The **Bridging the Tribal Digital Divide Act** to accelerate deployment of broadband services to Native communities.
- The **Indian Water Rights Settlement Extension Act** to secure a reliable source of funding in the future for Congressionally-authorized Indian water rights settlements.

As Ranking Member of the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee, Tom fought to increase funding for the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Bureau of Indian Education by almost 25 percent between 2015 and 2020—nearly tripling the funding for construction and maintenance of schools, public safety facilities and natural resource projects in the process. He also worked to enact an indefinite appropriation to fully fund BIA contract support costs to support self-governance.

